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"FREEDOM'S RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS"

**A Conversation With
DR. ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE**

With Dr. Thurston J. Davies Presiding



Adapted from A Town Hall
Lecture by Dr. Toynbee

BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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"FREEDOM'S RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS"

A Conversation with Arnold J. Toynbee; Thurston J. Davies presiding

DR. DAVIES: Good evening, friends. AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING tonight departs from its customary format to bring you the philosophies of a man acclaimed to be the greatest historian of this twentieth century.

Dr. Arnold J. Toynbee has distinguished himself in many fields -- as a teacher, as a writer, a servant of his government. We know him best, of course, for his monumental ten-volume work, "A Study of History," the last four volumes of which were published a year ago by the "Oxford University Press." In 1921 -- on half a sheet of paper, Dr. Toynbee listed a dozen headings which constituted his plan for the work which took twenty-five years of research and writing. From the beginning, the volumes attracted outstanding attention from other scholars and historians.

A frequent visitor to America, Dr. Toynbee has lectured at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton and many colleges and universities. Just a year ago, he lectured for the first time at Town Hall. His subject then was "The Lessons Of History." This year, his topic is: "Freedom's Religious Foundations" and it is on this theme that you will hear Dr. Toynbee tonight. The last half of our program will be devoted to questions from religious leaders, representative of the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths.

I think it might be rather interesting and appropriate to let Dr. Toynbee himself introduce his subject by hearing again a few words from his lecture of last season -- which, as you will note, lead directly into the subject of "Freedom's Religious Foundations." Dr. Toynbee said last year that, in his opinion, the virtues that we must cultivate in our world today are, first, tolerance -- and, then, patience. He went on to say:

DR. TOYNBEE: And if we can learn patience and tolerance, I think there are some encouraging examples from past history to hearten us in continuing on this very difficult course which we find ourselves. Of course, I'm thinking of the attitude towards one another that Christians and Mohammedans had in the Middle Ages; or that Catholic Western Christians and Protestant Western Christians had towards one another in the 17th Century. In both these situations, each party felt about the other party, I think, very much as we and the Communists are feeling about each other in our world today under much more dangerous conditions. They felt life is going to be quite intolerable if that other fellow -- that Moslem or that Christian society -- continues to exist in the world side by side with us. Life will be intolerable for Protestants if Catholics continue to exist; and for the Catholics if the Protestants continue to exist. Well, wars weren't so destructive then as now; and they fought a good deal of their wars in order to eliminate one another. Perhaps it's their official doctrine still to ask the authorities of the church -- officially ask the Catholic authorities; the Protestant authorities, the Moslem authorities -- if they ought to tolerate the other religious bodies. But they have to say, "No, they oughtn't to tolerate their existence; their existence was intolerable." And yet, for some centuries, we have managed to exist side by side with each other and to live intermingled in the same cities and to forget that it was our official doctrine that it was impossible for us to live with one another.

So let us perhaps aim in our world today at making the relations between the liberal free world and the Communist world follow the same unsensational course to the same undramatic denouement as happily the relations between the Christians and Moslems and the relations between the Catholic Christians and the Protestant Christians have followed in the past. But it was one lesson from history there that might be very profitable to us if we could manage to learn it.

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DR. DAVIES: Dr. Toynbee then was asked this question: Do you see any specific surge toward or away from religion which, as you recognized, is so important?

DR. TOYNBEE: I think in our Western world I see a movement towards religion. Perhaps in the Asian and African world, as in the Russian world, there may be a movement away from religion. They have had a great deal of religion in the past of a rather conventional kind -- and perhaps not enough of material welfare. I rather expect, as in the 19th Century, we emphasize material welfare rather than religion so perhaps Asia and Africa may. But, I think the stage will come -- as I believe it is coming with us -- when they will see that the basis, even of material welfare, is something spiritual and that without those spiritual roots material welfare can't be established and can't endure. So I expect, if as I hope, things take a happy turn and we use our technology for increasing the level of subsistence of that great mass of mankind in Asia and Africa that there may be a return to religion all over the world.

DR. DAVIES: With those words as a preface, Arnold J. Toynbee speaks to us now on the subject, "Freedom's Religious Foundations."

DR. TOYNBEE: Perhaps the best way to open up my question is in the form of a question to ourselves. What does our Western civilization stand for? Let's suppose that today we were to put this question, first, to a non-Westerner and then to our Western selves. What would be the answers that we should get? Today, I believe, the two answers would be very different from one another. I think the non-Westerner's answer would be, "Oh, the Western civilization stands for technology." And I fancy our own answer would be that the Western civilization stands for the sacredness of the individual human personality.

Now, let's imagine the same question being put several hundred years ago to our Western ancestors and to their non-Western contemporaries. In the past, let's say 300 or more years ago, I think the answers that those two parties would have given would not have been different. I think they would have been identical with one another. And I think this identical past answer would have been different again from either of the two answers that our question would receive today. I think in the past, non-Westerners and Westerners would have agreed with each other in answering that the Western civilization stands for Christianity. No doubt they might have disagreed, both about the merits of Christianity and about the standard maintained by the West in the practice of Christianity. Look at it from the standpoint of medieval Mohammedan, for instance. I think he would have said that though Christians were admittedly people in the book -- they had one of the revealed scriptures -- of course, the Revelation given in Christianity was only partial as compared to the Revelation given in Islam. And he would have gone on to say that the precepts of this Christian partial Revelation were practiced very imperfectly by his Christian neighbors. A medieval Western Christian on his side, would have made, of course, prior claims both for Christianity and for his practice of it. But the medieval Christian and the medieval Moslem would, I think, have agreed that Christianity was what the Western civilization did stand for in their day, according to the Western Christian peoples' lights. The Western Christian would have thought that his lights were rather brighter than the Moslems view of them; the Moslems would have thought them rather dimmer than the Christian thought them; but, subject to that, I think they would have agreed and I should say they would have been right in holding that the West stood for Christianity in their day in the sense that Christianity was, at that time, the West's avowed and genuine ideal, however far the West might fall in its practice from attaining its Christian ideals.

Then I could come to the point which leads us to the present day. I would say that during the recent age, when our Western society has been enjoying a temporary ascendancy in the world, the West has been remarkably indifferent to the religious foundations of its freedom. This unchallengeable ascendancy that the West did enjoy within living memory in the world lasted for more than 200 years, I believe 250 years. If one wants to find conventional dates for it, one would reckon that it began with the failure of the second Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, which definitely gave Christianity the ascendancy over Islam, and that it ended in 1914 with the outbreak

of the first World War because these World Wars have been really Civil Wars within our Western world and, of course, have quite changed the relation of power between our Western world and the rest of the world.

DR. DAVIES: From the historical perspectives of Christianity in the Western world, Dr. Toynbee comments next on more contemporary challenges to the Western way of life.

DR. TOYNBEE: Since 1914, the situation has changed. Within these last 41 years, the West has lost its previous ascendancy in the world -- anyway, its unchallenged ascendancy -- and, at the same time, it has lost its previous confidence in itself. Today, the West is confronted by formidable new challenges from outside which it hasn't the power to meet by the old simple method of imposing its will on all outsiders by force. When one doesn't command a decisive superiority of force over one's neighbors, one's only alternative is to argue one's case with them if one isn't willing to resign one's self to see one's case go completely by default. And this is the position in which the West finds itself today. We can no longer command the ascent of Asia and Africa by armaments -- we have to win their consent, if we can, by arguments. We have to try to persuade the non-Western majority of mankind that the Western outlook and the Western way of life are better than the rival systems which are now, once again, competing with our Western system for the allegiance of the human race. And one cannot, of course, put a case to other people, unless one has first examined it one's self. And then further, we should now find ourselves, I think, compelled to reexamine the foundations of our belief, even if we had no external challenges to meet -- let's try and think away communism, think away Russia -- I don't think that abolition of communism in Russia would let us off having to re-examine the foundations of our own beliefs. Because, why is our Western way of life being challenged once again by non-Westerners today? Because within these last 41 years the West has lost power and the Western way of life has lost credit. And because of these two losses that we have suffered is one and the same cause, what has enfeebled the West and has, at the same time, discredited it, is the atrocious -- you might call it fratricidal -- warfare within the bosom of our own Western society which we have been fighting since 1914.

DR. DAVIES: And what has this loss of power and prestige by the West meant to our freedom? Dr. Toynbee relates this to man's worship of himself.

DR. TOYNBEE: The record of this betrayal has been written by us into the history of these last 41 years. It's plainto the rest of the world and it stares us, ourselves, in the face. The great security of our Western civilization has been our belief in the sacredness of the individual human personality and yet, we've allowed freedom to be overthrown and abused and derided in several great Western countries by native Western rulers, to whose rule the peoples of those countries have submitted for long periods of years. So today we can't any longer avoid asking ourselves in all the countries of the West; what are the foundations of our Western freedom? Are these foundations firm? If they are not firm now, have they perhaps been firm in the past? And if they have decayed, is it possible for us to restore them? What are the conditions for keeping individual human beings free? I think that the first and the most fundamental of these conditions looks, at first sight, rather paradoxical. I could put it this way -- that man cannot be free unless he recognizes the truth that he is not the sovereign independent lord of creation. It's put in the 6th and 7th verses of the 82nd Psalm -- "I have said, Ye are gods;....But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." When man mistakes himself for God, he is sounding the death knell of human freedom because when man comes to believe that he is God, he falls to worshiping himself and when man worships himself, his human idol isn't the individual human being, it's the collective power of corporate humanity -- the great beast, Leviathan. You remember that semi-mythical beast -- that half a whale and half a hippopotamus in the Old Testament -- and you remember how that name, Leviathan, was taken by an English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, 300 years ago, for the title of a famous book. He wrote that book in a time which, like our own time, was

a painful time to live in. He wrote it with a sense of consternation at the demonic character of the spiritual forces that had been let loose by the 17th Century Civil War in England between the Parliament and King Charles I. So I would say, when man worships himself, he loses his freedom and he loses it because what he worships is not his individual freedom, but his collective power. The idolization of collective human power turns all the idolators into slaves and I would add that the most abject slave of all is the nominal despot in whose person this idolized collective human power has so often been symbolized.

DR. DAVIES: Dr. Toynbee speaks now on the effect of our modern technological civilization upon our spiritual values, the preservation of our freedoms, and particularly the religious foundations which -- in earlier centuries -- established the freedom of the individual.

DR. TOYNBEE: Technology, instead of religion, is what our Western civilization has, in fact, come to stand for by our time, some 300 years after the 17th Century beginning of our revolutionary Western transfer of spiritual values. That would be the diagnosis of any non-Western observer of our Western civilization today. And, in making that diagnosis, wouldn't the non-Western observer of our 20th Century Western civilization be substantially right? And yet, at the same time, we, ourselves, are speaking the truth when we declare that, for our part, as we see it, what our Western civilization stands for today for us, is not technology, but is still the sacredness of the human individual personality. We 20th Century Westerners hold personal freedom just as sacred as our predecessors did, but here is the paradox of our present position. We still place supreme value on this traditional Western spiritual treasure. In becoming devotees of science and technology, we have not ceased to be devotees of freedom, but in relinquishing our hold on Christianity, we have deprived our belief in freedom from its religious foundations. And if I have been right in finding those foundations in Christian beliefs about God and man as a part of Christianity's heritage from Israel's, our present position in the West is not merely a paradoxical one, but also one that cannot last. We are, in fact, confronted, I believe, by two alternatives between which, sooner or later, and most probably soon rather than late, we shall find ourselves forced to choose. Either we shall lose our freedom or else, if we preserve it, we shall preserve it by reestablishing it on the religious foundations without which, in my belief, we cannot permanently stand.

I am sure that I am speaking for Westerners on this side of the Atlantic as well as on the other side, if I say that today all Westerners are determined to preserve that respect for the freedom of the individual human personality that is so precious a part of our Western cultural heritage. But mere determination, however strong and however sincere, doesn't, of course, carry with it automatically the power to put our will into effect. If it is our will to preserve our Western heritage of freedom, then it must also be our will to reestablish this freedom's religious foundations. Supposing that it is true, as I have contended, that human freedom cannot stand permanently without having these foundations to support it. But here we find ourselves willing something that a sheer act of human will cannot accomplish because religion is one of man's spiritual treasures that is not entirely at man's own disposal. Religion isn't like a dog who we can first drive away with a kick and then call back to heel by a whistle, just as the fancy may take us or our human convenience may demand. It may be convenient for non-religious purposes to revive religion. It might be convenient for us Westerners in the plight in which we find ourselves today, but it is never possible to revive religion just for non-religious, utilitarian reasons. The only motive for reviving religion that has any chance of bringing religion back to life is a sincere and disinterested thirst for religion for its own sake, and not for any incidental, useful consequences. We may hope and pray that with the help of God's grace this pure thirst for religion, for its own sake, may spring up again in our hearts, but that's a miracle that can't be performed by any form of social engineering. The miracle may be a necessary prelude to the execution of the social engineer's plan for social reconstruction, but he can't perform the miracle himself just because it would be convenient to him if it had happened.

DR. DAVIES: Dr. Toynbee talks of the translation of religious inspiration into the language of science and the need for reestablishing our heritage of religious foundation.

DR. TOYNBEE: The truths of religion are apprehended at a deeper level of the soul than the intellectual surface. They spring out from the same deep level as the truths of poetry. None of us would think of trying to translate an inspired poem into the language of either philosophy or science. We should be deterred from doing that by our foreknowledge that if we did try our hand at translating the language of poetry to the language of science or philosophy, all that we should achieve would be to empty the poem of its poetry. We shouldn't turn it into science or philosophy. And I believe what holds good for poetry holds good for religion, too. When we try to translate religious inspiration into the language of science or philosophy, we simply drain the inspiration away. The truth is religion, like poetry, has a language of its own and it cannot be translated out of its native language into any other. But this intellectual stumbling block is not the most formidable, I fear, that a Western revival of Christianity will meet with. Let's remind ourselves once again what element in Christianity it was that first caused the miscarriage of medieval Western Christendom and, in the end, brought about the 17th Century Western spiritual revolution first against fanaticism, then against Christianity, then against religion itself, and is still going on today. If I have been right in my diagnosis, the baneful element in Christianity is its fanaticism and Christian fanaticism, like the Christian beliefs about God and man, that are the foundations of our Western freedom is, unhappily, also part of Christianity's heritage from Israel. Christianity, I will put it, inherited from Israel -- a field in which a crop had already been sown, and this crop is a mixture of wheat and tares. Christianity inherited from Israel the revelation that man's freedom is precious to God because it is God's gift to man as man's distinctive human birthright, but Christianity, at the same time, inherited from Israel another picture of God and man which is so different that the two pictures seem really to be incompatible. In this other picture God stands not for love, but for jealousy. He has revealed the truth about himself and about man, not to all mankind but to a chosen people -- for one chosen people it may be Israel -- for another it may be the Christian Church -- for another it may be the Islamic community, but the idea is always the same and this revelation of the truth is unique and exclusive. It alone is valid and its recipients alone are true believers. That is the element in Christianity that made Christianity a source of strife and scandal in Western Christendom from, I would say, the 13th Century to the 17th Century of our era. And the tragedy of our own past history warns us that if a revival of Christianity were to bring with it a revival of this traditional exclusive and intolerant element in Christianity, the same cause would almost certainly once again produce the same tragic effects. So can we reharvest the wheat in Christianity without reharvesting the tares? Can we reenter into communion with the God who is love, without relapsing into the worship of the jealous God whose fanatical devotees have worked such havoc in the past -- whether they have been Christian devotees, or Moslem devotees or Jewish devotees of that vision of God.

This, it seems to me, is the question on which our future hangs because, in my belief, we cannot preserve our freedom without reestablishing its religious foundations and God's love is the only foundation on which man's freedom can stand.

DR. DAVIES: Dr. Toynbee answers now the questions of seven clergymen and leaders in the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths -- and we hear first from Dr. Phillips P. Elliott, minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn, and President of the Protestant Council of New York. Dr. Elliott.

DR. ELLIOTT: I formulated a question in the very early part of your address which seemed to provide something of a motif all through and which you almost answered at the end, so that I am going to have to ask it anyway because I think one more step needs to be taken. This has to do with the danger that man will deify himself or his nation and, therefore, in that self worship will lose his freedom. I think the danger

is not that man perhaps will deify himself, but rather that he will think of himself as an agent of the Most High God and that his various missions throughout the earth -- that the skills and technologies which he devises and perfects are given to him by God so that he may use them on behalf of his own cause and the cause of the group he represents. What I am trying to ask you, Sir, and perhaps this goes a bit into the realm of the personal but I think it has to be asked, is how a person checks himself so that instead of identifying his will with the will of God, or his nation's will with the will of God, he achieves a receptivity at that point which will keep him from the arrogance which speaking on behalf of God is likely to imply. And I should think that this would impinge upon our whole approach to the orient -- changing our attitude from one of dogmatism to one of appreciation. Let me word it this way then, if I may. It's the question the Saints have always struggled with. How can one know the will of God or one's self or one's land or, perhaps, put another way, -- how can one achieve a genuine personal or national humility?

DR. TOYNBEE: It's one of the fundamental questions, of course. It's a never-ending battle. The test, I am sure, is humility. And the price of humility, like liberty, is eternal vigilance. It is no accident, I am sure, that the Saints, who are so much better than the rest of us, have been so much more conscious of their sinfulness than the rest of us. It was because their sensitiveness to this sin above all but pride was very high and, of course, they had to sin like the rest of us though what, for us, would be a very small degree. So I would say the vigilance and humility that is shown by the Saints is the hard ideal which we ought to strive towards ourselves.

DR. DAVIES: Our second questioner is Dr. Charles Donahue, Professor of English at the Graduate School of Fordham University.

DR. DONAHUE: I am, of course, a Roman Catholic and I am very much gratified to find that I am in agreement with almost everything that Dr. Toynbee has said and I think it is interesting that, coming at the problem from the point of view of a different Christian tradition, Dr. Toynbee's analysis of our present difficulties should be one so close to what I, and I think many of my fellow religionists feel about the situation. There is one question that I would like to raise. We feel that in the United States at present, there is most decidedly a revival of interest in religion. We're not quite sure yet how serious we should take it, but it is a fact that more people are going to church. It is a fact that the students in even our non-secular universities are showing an interest that they certainly did not show ten years ago, in courses in religion and the relation of religion to culture -- things of that sort. Now, in America, this interest in religion is manifesting itself in what we call a "pluralistic" way. There is no attempt to find a general religion for all of us -- people are seeking, usually according to their family traditions, increased, more intensive religious life either within one of the Protestant Churches, within the Roman Catholic Church or in the Jewish community, and I would like to ask Dr. Toynbee what his reaction is to that particular pluralistic tendency in the United States at present?

DR. TOYNBEE: I wouldn't expect, either in the United States or in the Western world as a whole -- in the world as a whole -- to see the historic religions lose their historical identity. But I should expect us to see them enter into much more intimate acquaintance with each other and perhaps to learn many things from each other. I think the whole group of what you might call "Judaic" or "Palestinian" religions has a great deal to learn from the Indian group of religions -- which are the religions of half the human race -- and, of course, vice versa. Let's take as a practical example Mr. Gandhi, one of the greatest Saints within our lifetime in any part of the world. Now, he was Hindu and he was recognized by his people as the Hindu leader in that tradition, yet he acknowledged -- it's unmistakable -- that his Hinduism was greatly influenced by Christianity and was no less Hindu being that. That sort of mutual influence I expect to see. These things change very slowly because tactics have suddenly brought us into physical contact with each other -- people of the widest different cultural and religious heritages -- and that can be done, as we have seen, very quickly. For

people of different spiritual heritages to grow together, so that the heritages become in some sense the common heritage of the human race and for them to sort themselves out in peaceful debate with each other is the slow and long process, I think, for which we need great patience.

DR. DAVIES: Our next questioner is Rabbi James G. Heller. He is former Rabbi of the Isaac Mayer Wise Temple in Cincinnati and he is now Chairman of Community Relations for the Development Corporation of Israel.

RABBI HELLER: Dr. Toynbee, and ladies and gentlemen. I am sure it can be no surprise to Dr. Toynbee and to the members of this audience that, like those who preceded me, I find myself in the heartiest agreement with his analysis and with his thesis. This is the direction in which many of us have been thinking and hoping for a long time. Naturally, what he has said has also stimulated a great many questions in my own mind, as doubtless in that of others. I wondered whether Dr. Toynbee has taken into account in religion itself some of the tendencies toward a belief in human depravity rather than in human freedom -- in salvation by grace, rather than by the development of the individual and his own individual choice -- whether religion itself ought not to rethink its position in regard to individual freedom all along the line? Secondly, I would like to ask whether there does not appear to be in science itself today at least a dissolution of the positivism that grew out of the 17th and 18th Centuries which, at least from a negative side, may pave the way for a revival of religion intellectually? And, lastly, whether there does not lie in our own Christian-Jewish tradition the answer to the question in the Old Testament "When ye seek me, ye shall find me," -- "When ye seek with all your heart," -- and in the New Testament -- "Ask and it shall be given."

DR. TOYNBEE: I would agree that facing our own depravities is the first step because without facing our depravities there can be no humility. Without humility, there can be no avenue from man to God and without communion between man and God there can be no freedom, so I think that recognition of our depravities probably is one of the foundation stones to freedom. If we don't recognize it, we shall certainly fall slaves to this man-worship -- the illusion about what the nature of man is. The second question was about a change in the spirit of science. Yes, I think that is very true. I think until, you might say almost until 1945, our scientists continued in that very natural, rather simple-minded view that you can see starting in the 17th Century, that whereas religion is the cause of great dissension and strife and evil, that science is wholly beneficent and harmless and what it has to do is to turn out new discoveries and new applications for these discoveries and they will enrich human life. I think in our time scientists have suddenly realized that what they were turning out was human power and that power is a neutral thing which can be used for good or evil and that they were simply arming mankind with new possibilities for good or evil. I think that has been a very sobering thought for scientists. At the same moment, of course, they have been intellectually sobered by finding that the intellectual framework in which science has been moving forward during the last few centuries seems to be changing in their hands so they had a double cause for, again, humility. In every situation, perhaps, humility is the key. Your third question now, Sir?

RABBI HELLER: It was not a question, merely saying that "If we seek it, we shall find it" in this civilization and life.

DR. TOYNBEE: Yes!

DR. DAVIES: Our next questioner is Dr. Samuel Sweeney, Minister of St. Mark's Methodist Church here in New York. Dr. Sweeney!

DR. SWEENEY: Mr. Chairman, Dr. Toynbee. I am afraid my question will have to be a rather practical one. Would you care to comment a little further on what you believe to be the dominant causes of the lag in good human relations, as between the so-called "minority" and so-called "majority" peoples of the world? And is religion itself, as it is practiced among us, one of these causes?

DR. TOYNBEE: I think the main cause of the lag in good will between the Western minority and the rest of the world probably has been the great material power in the

West in recent centuries. Being human, we Westerners have different degrees of abusing power or not abusing it, but we obviously have abused it to a considerable extent. Anyway, the non-Western majority have felt that they were very much at our mercy. Hence, I think, the tremendous emphasis that they have laid upon our technology as a means of holding their own against us from the day of Peter the Great in Russia onwards. In all non-Western countries they have felt this tremendous importance of mastering Western technology in order to hold their own in this rather naked struggle for power. I think in the past they've perhaps felt, rightly or wrongly, that we were using our power to impose our religion. In the first stage of Western expansion, the 16th and 17th Centuries, undoubtedly the Western conquerors did use that power to impose their religion. The Spanish conquerors of Mexico and Peru used it for that purpose -- forcibly converted the people they conquered -- and the Chinese and the Japanese turned out the Westerners in the 17th Century because they didn't want to have Western civilization, including Western religion imposed upon them. In the later age -- in the Dutch, French, British, American period of expansion -- the businessmen and the colonial administrators have, I think, rather cynically tried to introduce Western civilization, leaving religion out because they felt that religion might be a disturbing factor in their business in the non-Western world. And I think that in another way brought the Westerner discredit. Don't the Westerners really believe in their own religion and that they are rather shy of propagating it. Of course, our missionaries have propagated it but they haven't had a leading part in Western expansion in recent times, since about 1700. They had between 1500 and 1700.

DR. DAVIES: Our next questioner is Dr. Barry Ulanov, who is Professor of English at Barnard College here in New York. He is also Associate Editor of "The Bridge," the yearbook of the Institute of Judaeo-Christian studies at Seton Hall University. Dr. Ulanov!

DR. ULANOV: Dr. Toynbee, while much cheered and deeply moved, as all my fellow interrogators were by your words, I was also concerned that perhaps there was an implication that in our struggle against the fanaticism associated for all too long with our religion, we might be also attenuating the very substance of the Christian tradition and I wondered if you thought that in making some attempt to translate the Christian belief and sacredness of the human personality into the traditional language of Eastern philosophy and ritual, as you suggest in your "Study of History," that the Jesuits were beginning to do in the 17th Century, we might perhaps lose that substance. The translation might be more into a new language and too firmly out of the old belief?

DR. TOYNBEE: There is a great and constant danger of that, I think. Without conviction, every religion that has ever had any hold on mens' hearts has had it because it believed and convinced people who became converts to it that it was presenting -- I won't used the word "revelations" -- let's say presenting some things that are essential to man's spiritual life. Without that, without that conviction, religion can do nothing. I would add, though, that if it falls over from its competency that possesses something essential into the pride that makes it believe that it has something unique, then it may fall over into doing a great deal, but doing much that is evil. And the dividing line between the belief that one has some revelation or understanding or inspiration, intuition, that is essential, and the belief that it is unique, is very hard -- it's not very hard, perhaps, in logic to draw -- but it's very hard psychologically for human beings to draw. And that is, I think, a very important distinction to make in the world today. I think we can believe that our religion contains things that are essential to man's salvation without believing that all light and the only light is in our religion -- that other religions are entirely in utter darkness when they believe in different degrees of light. But if God is compassionate in Mohammed's language or loved in the language of the Epistles, he can't have left any church, people, individual, that belong to the human race unenlightened altogether without means of approaching him and I think that should be our approach to other religions.

DR. DAVIES: Our next questions is Dr. Will Herberg, Sociologist; author of the book, "Protestant - Catholic - Jew: An Essay on American Religious Sociology," and of many other works.

DR. HERBERG: I, too, want to express my gratitude to Dr. Toynbee, for his profound and profoundly relevant presentation. And from my Jewish standpoint, I, too, want to register my agreement with almost everything Dr. Toynbee has said.

Isn't it true that Christianity and Judaism stand or fall on the conviction that they do have something unique, not merely something essential, but something unique? Don't you think that precisely because ultimate reality is worshiped under its impersonal aspect in Eastern religions, there is not the same protection against idolatry as there is in Jewish, Christian, Moslem teachings?

DR. TOYNBEE: I personally would distinguish and feel that it is very important between believing that one has essential truths, insights, revelations of how to live, what to do, and believing that those are unique. Of course, it is very hard for any of us in the Judaic tradition, our half of the world, to get out of our skins and look at ourselves and at religion and the relation between man and God from the other half of the world's point of view -- this Indian half. One has to try and do it as best one can and they had to do it the other way around. I would say those essential things in Christianity do -- Judaism and Islam -- do occur, are to be found in the religions of Indian origin. There is an impersonal aspect of ultimate reality which comes to light more clearly, I think, in the Indian philosophies and religions than in ours -- and yet the mystics of all the Judaic religions do have this vision of God through a kind of impersonal lens, as well as through the personal one, though the personal one among us is much more emphasized. And in the Indian religions the personal aspect of God, of course, is also present as well as the impersonal one. The notion of God as loving and self-sacrificing -- the notion of the supreme value in spirit as we know it, as being of that nature -- that comes out, I think, in Buddhism very much. Think of the story of the temptation of the Buddha after his enlightenment when he has reached the point where he can step out of this world into Nirvana and by one step more he is enlightened and he can rid himself of all the evils of this world and the temptor tempts him to do it. He says, "No, I will stay in the world for the rest of my natural life, in order to show other people the road." That is the same attitude really and that's been very much developed in the later schools of Buddhism, rather significantly, as we have in Judaism or Christianity. The safeguard in the belief that God is a jealous God -- yes, but man is rather a rebellious creature and if he is shown the whip or coercion, one of his tendencies and I would say partly a good tendency, is to revolt against that. I think love can always draw him, but commands cannot always draw him. And I believe myself that it is the aspect of God as love and self-sacrifice will always draw man, not the aspect of jealousy and command. That's a fundamental issue. In general, in conclusion, I would say that I do think that the Indian half of the world has a lot to teach to our Palestinian half -- especially in the present condition of the world. This mortally dangerous condition when we are again in a state of recrudescence of fanaticism as we were in the 17th Century, only this time we are armed with these unprecedented weapons. Now, the Indian half of the world may be less heroic -- there are fewer martyrs in Buddhism and Hinduism than there are in Judaism, Christianity and Islam -- but there also are few atrocities in their religious history than there are in our Mohammedan, Jewish and Christian history. You can't have anything without paying the price. It may have -- the temperature is very high, great heroism, great enthusiasm, great atrocities -- or we may have it lower, great charity, less heroism. I think these two halves of the world are complimentary to each other and I think the Indian half has a very great contribution to make for all of us in the very dangerous chapter which we are just entering now. That are a half of the world.

DR. DAVIES: Our last questioner is the Reverend Karl M. Chworowsky, Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Fairfield County, Connecticut. Dr. Chworowsky is the author of "What is a Unitarian?" and he had a very provocative article in "Look" Magazine last March.

DR. CHWOROWSKY: Dr. Toynbee, may I add my thank you to that of my colleagues and ask you just this brief question. I make it very brief because, as a representative of a minority, I should be as short as a minority is small.

I am assuming that, from what you have said concerning the religious foundations of freedom, your emphasis has been centered almost entirely upon what we call revealed religion. Where, in this picture, Sir, would natural religion enter? Thank you.

DR. TOYNBEE: Natural religion, I think, today is represented by the Indian half of the world, but I spoke in terms of revealed religions as talking of our Western problem and our Western religious foundations on which, as a matter of history, I think our Western ideas of freedom are built. I would add to what has come out in my answers to these questions that the Indian half has a lot to teach us and I think the Indian half of the world is really the heir of, in a sense, Greek philosophy and Greco-Roman religion, before the rise of Christianity.

DR. CHWOROWSKY: Dr. Toynbee, I speak for a group of what we know as "naturalistic humanists" among Unitarians and they're not particularly anxious to be converted to Hinduism. That want to be a part of this Western religious culture. That's why I asked and maybe you can comfort them a little bit, because even among us Unitarians we still call ourselves theistic. Humanists, at times, are very uncomfortable.

DR. TOYNBEE: I would say that humanism is, perhaps, an ambiguous word. If it means regarding man as the crown of the universe, Lord of the universe -- the highest thing we are aware of in the universe -- I would say that it has in it the dangers which I suggested in speaking. If it means a non-theistic approach to the universe, which is non-theistic, but believes that man is himself not the highest thing in the universe and, therefore, brings man to the humility which is the beginning of salvation -- then I would feel that I personally was in harmony with it.

DR. DAVIES: You have heard the distinguished historian, Arnold J. Toynbee, on the subject "Freedom's Religious Foundations" -- rebroadcast from his lecture at Town Hall, New York. Our thanks to Dr. Toynbee and to our panel of interrogators.

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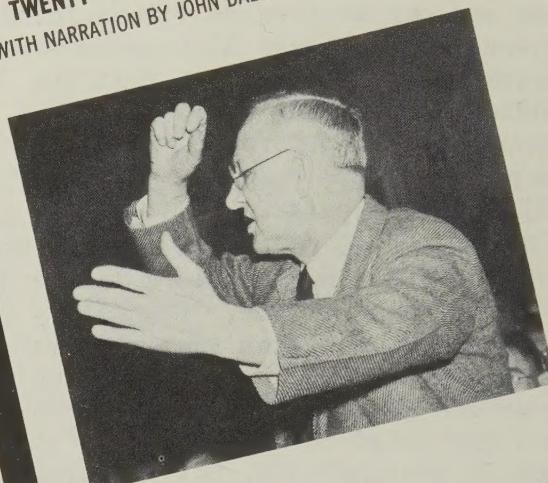
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